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551 Names were given to children very soon after birth. Names were frequently changed and given away. A man would receive his father's name
553 from the latter, or would take it after his death. If a child were sickly, a relative, such as a grandfather, sometimes gave him another name. A sick person sometimes also took a new name in order to recover. Renowned warriors sometimes gave away their names to young men. They might retain the same name for themselves, or take a new one. One very aged man gave away his name to a young man, telling him, "I give you my name in order that you may have as long a life as I." This was done without the occasion or accompaniment of a ceremony.

There seems to have been no prohibition against mentioning the name of the dead, nor even any reluctance on the matter. Some people, however, were ashamed to speak their own names.

551 Twins, called niiçan, were named, if boys, respectively Knaen and Niiçan.
845 The latter name, however, was not always used, an ordinary name being given instead. Girl twins were not called by these names.

302 The hair was formerly worn in braids, as at present customary among the Plains tribes, but also erect over the forehead. The women wore their
[765] hair either in braids or sometimes loose. In mourning, the hair, especially of the women, was cut about halfway across the cheek.

304 Ear-piercing, which among the Arapaho is performed on ceremonial occasions, and is itself accompanied with ceremony and giving of presents, was said among the Gros Ventre to be unaccompanied by special ceremonial actions. A woman or any one else does the piercing.

857 Boys who were herding horses sometimes took off their clothes and
673 daubed themselves with mud until they were unrecognizable. They painted their horses, and made shields of willow. Then they came to the camp,
868 mounted or on foot, to steal meat. Approaching the camp like a war-party, they would select the best meat hanging outdoors, charge on it, take it, and run. The old men and women and children chased them with clubs, but of course without success. The boys would go back to where they were herding, and have a feast.

576 The Gros Ventre say that both hand-shaking and kissing are aboriginal with them.

GAMES.

524 A common cup-and-ball game called tsöötskuutjan ("throw in") consisted of four hollow deer or antelope leg bones, each about two inches long, attached to a string passing through them, at the end of which there was a needle eight or ten inches long. This game appears to be identical with

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524 531 A form of the widely spread guessing-game occurred among the Gros Ventre. Two buttons, which were enclosed in the hand, were used. At the beginning each player held one button. One of them guessed in which hand the other held the button. If he guessed wrong, his opponent got four counters; but if he guessed right, his opponent must yield the button to him. When he held two, his opponent guessed in which hand each of them was. If his opponent guessed wrong, the player received two counters; but if his opponent was right, the player must hand over both buttons, and himself guess. The game was played for twelve stick counters. These at the beginning were in a pile belonging to neither of the players. This neutral pile was drawn upon until exhausted, before either player gave counters to the other. This method of using counters was customary in Arapaho and Gros Ventre games.

Fig. 18 (50-4325, 50-4325 a). Dice. Lengths, 15 cm., 16 cm.

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The buttons used in this game are different from those the Arapaho have had in recent years. They lack symbolism altogether, and are even without the red-black color-dualism obvious in the Arapaho game. The elaborate counters, food-sticks, pointers, and head-dresses of the Arapaho are also not found among the Gros Ventre. Of one pair of buttons, one was of brass beads, the other of green glass beads. They were called respectively "long" and "short." Another pair, made of bone, are illustrated in Fig. 19. A single button made of bone, apparently from a tooth-brush-handle, is shown in Fig. 20.

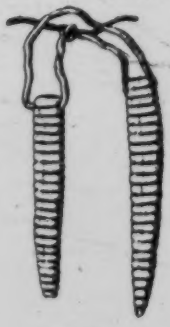

Fig. 19.

Fig. 19 (50-1931 a, b). Hiding-buttons. Length, 7 cm.

Fig. 20.

Fig. 20 (50-1917). Hiding-button. Length, 6 cm.

526 857 Boys shot arrows or threw sticks at a netted hoop, apparently identical with the Arapaho hoop except for nomenclature. The central mesh, called the "crow" or "crow's heart," won the game for whoever hit it. If the "crow's heart" was not pierced, a point was scored by the arrow nearest to it. An arrow passing through the netting without being held in it counted nothing. If one of the hoops rolled within reach, a player was at liberty to

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spear and catch it on his stick, or, if it was flying through the air, he was allowed to do the same. On winning, he put the wheel on top of his head, keeping it there as long as he could. When it fell down, the others all threw their wheels at him while he cowered under his robe. The wheel was usually thrown overhand, as were the sticks.

Another game was played with bow and arrows. The bow was rested in a diagonal position or held in the hand, while an arrow was several times tapped against the string and then suddenly released so that it was thrown several feet. Another player then followed, trying to cause his arrow to be thrown so as to rest on the first. If none of the players succeeded in hitting the others' arrows, all the arrows used were put aside in a pile as stakes, and the game recommenced.

Fig. 21 (-50 1859). Grass Target. Length, 23 cm.

Still another game played by boys consisted of five sticks or arrows. The smallest, a white stick, was thrown ahead, and the longer sticks were thrown after it. The stick that came nearest the short piece won as many points as agreed upon, but a stick resting on the short piece won the game. This game, like others of boys, was played for arrows.

Another game played by boys was to throw sticks at a forked stick stood up in the ground. A player whose stick rested in the fork won the other sticks played with. If all the players missed, they laid their sticks into the fork as stakes. They continued to do this after each throw, until a player, by dropping his stick into the fork, won all those that were there. The sticks were thrown from a mark in the ground made at a certain distance from the fork.

Boys played still another game by throwing sticks so as to strike the ground, bounce, and slide; the one throwing farthest winning the sticks of the others. These sticks were held at the very end, and thrown underhand. Like all sticks or arrows used in games, they were called "kanii." Sometimes longer darts were used, which were slid over the instep of the foot.

Boys also played by setting up three sticks or arrows in a row, and shooting at them. The one whose arrow rested nearest the middle upright stick won. In case of doubt, a small stick was used to measure the distance. This game seems to have been played indoors. Outdoors the shooting would be from a greater distance. Whoever came nearest to the mark then threw up and shot at a bunch of grass, exts'tu". If he hit the bunch while

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it was in the air, he won. This game was played customarily for arrows as stakes. Such a bunch of grass which was shot at is shown in Fig. 21. It is curved, and tapers to one end, and it is wound with sinew.

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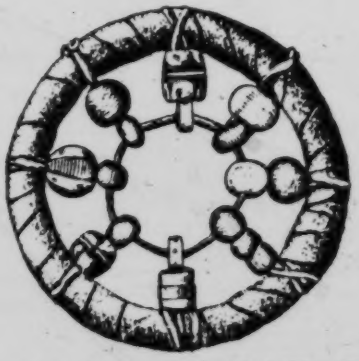

Fig. 22 (50-1954). Gaming-wheel. Diameter, 8 cm.

Adults — instead of throwing sticks, or shooting arrows at a netted hoop — rolled a small hoop in a carefully cleared and smoothed place towards a log or obstruction, while they threw at it with arrows or sticks, trying to have the hoop and the arrow in contact when at rest. The hoops were ornamented with beads or other small objects of different colors or shapes, and certain values in counters were given to each of these ornaments (Fig. 22). Usually there were two small banks or logs, one at each end of the course, a hoop being rolled alternately back and forth. It is said that, in order to score, it was necessary for some part of the hoop to rest on the point of the arrow, the shaft not counting. If several of the sets of beads on the hoop touched the arrowhead, the score was the sum of the points of the several ornaments.

Shinny was played with bent sticks and a ball by young men against girls. In driving the ball towards the goal, each player tried to keep it to himself as long as he could. The balls were stuffed with deer-hair. The goal at each end of the field was marked by a pair of monuments of stone. It is said that the young women often won from the young men.

Fig. 23 (50-1896). Women's Football. Diameter, 14 cm.

Ball was played by women or girls standing in a circle and striking the ball back and forth with the open palm until one missed it, whereupon all rushed for it. Whoever secured the ball started throwing it again. Sometimes it was thrown from one to another around a circle. When one failed to catch it, the others scattered. Picking up the ball, she pursued them with it while they looked for buffalo-chips on which to stand. There they were safe. Some, how-

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526 Fig. 25 shows one side of a small ball painted yellow, on which is a rude embroidery in red, yellow, and green quills, representing a bird. On the 532 opposite side is a red quilled cross. The bird-embroidery recalls the quill-ornamentation of an Arapaho ghost-dance drumstick and hand implement, both of them with stuffed heads of painted skin; also the painting of a crow on an Arapaho ghost-dance ball.[1]

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Fig. 25 (50-1731). Embroidered and Painted Ball. Diameter, 7 cm.

A game of throwing willow sticks on the ice, to see who could slide them farthest, was played by women. These sticks were sometimes tipped with buffalo-calves' horns. Young men, as well as women, sometimes threw horn-pointed sticks on the ice. It is said that women used long sticks, young men short sticks.

Children slid on the ice at a place they had made smooth. A boy and then a girl would slide alternately. When the whole party had slid one way, they would return, sliding in the opposite direction.

A toy made to slide on the ice consists of a bone to which two feathered sticks are attached at a diverging angle. It is called "tataxtsiteebya"." The object is to bounce or slide the implement over the ice as far as possible. This type of object is found among a number of Plains tribes.

493 Boys' sleds for coasting on hillsides were made of several buffalo-ribs held together at each end by a long 526 thong winding in and out around the two halves of a ● 857 split stick. A buffalo-tail was tied behind. These sleds were called "sö"w"haana"." When a man presented such a sled to another man's boy, he received presents from the boy's parents. In early summer, when the grass was green, toboggans of rawhide were used on the hillsides. The front was held up and bent over, and the bottom soon became very smooth.

Fig. 26 (50-1788). Bull-roarer. Length, 56 cm.

227 Slings were used by boys for killing birds and small animals. The entire 411 sling was made of skin. The thongs were passed through holes near the 857

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part IV, p. 393, Fig. 151.

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
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ends of the main portion of the sling, and then looped on themselves through a slit near one end.

The bull-roarer and buzzer were both well known to the Gros Ventre, but seem to be only children's toys. They were both called nakaa"ta" ("making cold," a name given also to the thermometer), probably from the widespread Indian idea that the bull-roarer breeds wind. The buzzer was made of a foot-bone of a buffalo, with a sinew string on each side, by which it was twirled, and then drawn so as to hum. The Arapaho type of buzzer is the same. The Gros Ventre bull-roarer seems to differ from the Arapaho form. Fig. 20 shows one of two very similar models, both of wood. The small, well-marked head, the long taper and point, and the numerous small notches, mark a distinct form. The sinew string is of about the length of the stick handle.

WAR.

Men generally went to war on foot, carrying food and moccasins on their backs. While on the trip they did not boil meat, but roasted it. Scouts, called "wolves," were sent out ahead. When these returned, running in a zigzag course, and shouting, it was a sign that they had seen something. If they had seen lodges, they barked like wolves. While they came, the women in the party stood in a row and sang, having made a pile of buffalo-chips. The "wolves" stopped a short distance away, and the leader of the party went to them. They came with him back to the pile of buffalo-chips, where he stopped, and, facing the party, recounted coups. After this, one of the scouts came before them and reported what he had seen. Upon this, all rushed at the pile of buffalo-chips, and kicked them about. If the enemy were near, they would now take off their heavier clothing, such as their robes, and dress and paint for war.

On returning to their camp victorious, the party approached stealthily, and made a charge upon it, often shooting; and sometimes the people in the tents jumped up out of their sleep in the early morning, thinking they had been attacked. The man who had killed an enemy, the one who had struck him first (whether dead or alive), and the one who had taken his gun, were held in about the same esteem. After the return to camp, a dance was made. Drums were beaten; and the women, who were standing in a curved row, danced in a circle toward the men, who stood in a row, and back again. The women carried the new scalps on sticks. If an enemy were killed near the home camp, his feet and hands might be cut off and carried on sticks, like the scalps. During this dance the man who first

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an enemy; and each took from among the property as nearly as possible such objects as he had actually captured in war. One who had stolen horses would take a horse; one who had taken a gun from an enemy would pick out a gun. While this was being done, or soon after, the dancers were dancing, concluding with a race similar to that in the crazy-dance. This marked the end of the ceremony. 796

There were several degrees of distinction in this dance. Two men had crooked lances wrapped with otter-skin. In four places these lances were tied about with small strips of white fur from which a pair of eagle-feathers hung. These lances were called nouqä"ts'ta". Two other lances were straight, and wrapped with jack-rabbit skin. These also bore feathers. A single dancer had a rattle of the globular shape common on the Plains. Half of the rattle was painted red, and half blue; and feathers were attached both to the top of the rattle and to the bottom of its handle. These regalia of honor were given to men renowned in war. A pipe was brought such a man, and if he thought himself entitled to the honor, and was ready to accept it, he took the pipe. If a man felt that others were really braver than himself, or had some other reason, he refused to take the pipe. One informant stated that he had declined the proffered honor because his wife's brother had recently died. The rank and file of the kit-fox dancers are said to have worn belts of prairie-dog skin. How far these corresponded with the biitaha"wu belts of the Arapaho is uncertain. The fur-wrapped crooked and straight lances are certainly similar to the crooked and straight lances indicating the second and third degrees in the Arapaho biitaha"wu. 796 554 293 [534]

Two girls took part in this ceremony. They were girls who were much thought of and beloved by their relatives. One of the dancers carried a kit-fox skin, the inside of which was painted blue. His companion had the rattle that has been described. While he rattled, the other, holding the skin by the neck and the tail, pointed it at the other dancers. These ran off, and this seems to have been the signal for the beginning of the dance. The two girls followed these two men everywhere. Their parents and relatives gave away great quantities of property in the dancing-lodge. Something similar is found in one of the Cheyenne society-dances, in which four young women accompanied the dancers from place to place. 796 857 593 [171]

Nothing was learned about the origin of the kit-fox dance, except that it is said to have been given by the kit-foxes, which is like what the Cheyenne tell of their analogous society. 796

A neck-band of badger-skin is the only object secured said to have been used in the kit-fox dance. To the end of it a tip of whitish rabbit-fur is attached. The lower part of the piece, which bears this rabbit-fur, hangs down the dancer's back. The upper portion, which is about four inches wide, is slit for a distance of a foot. Through this slit the head is inserted. [292]

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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right off,—are about the first words a baby says. When a child is backward in learning to talk, the remedy is to feed him meadowlark eggs, hard-boiled. Cora says this treatment was very effective for one of her sons, and Coming Daylight fed them to one of her daughters. They all agreed, however, that the treatment may sometimes be too effective. If anyone is very talkative even today the favorite saying is: "His mother must have fed him meadowlark eggs." [198] 856

The care of her baby was the first duty of a mother. Of course, if she were a co-wife, the other wives might help her, and in any case the grandmother might take a hand. But Coming Daylight often had no one upon whom she could depend, so she had to be extremely careful. For example, when she was married to Little Man and had an infant in the toddling stage, she would drape a blanket loosely about her hips and while she sat and did beadwork, the infant could play safely at her left hip inside the blanket. The old-timers, moreover, never left a baby alone. When her first child was born Coming Daylight was told by her grandmother never to leave a baby alone; that if it were absolutely necessary she should leave him even for a minute, she should take a small stick, blacken the tip with nicotine, and leave it in the swing or alongside where the infant lay. This was done to keep the "spirits" away. Even Mary feels strongly about leaving a child alone. She tells her daughter about it, but the daughter is very modern. The result is that frequently Mary stays home from a dance rather than leave a grandchild by itself. 854 854 751

If the mother of a young infant was going on a trip, for instance, to pick berries, she invited the baby's *bttd"tao* 'shadow, spirit, soul' saying: "Come on with us or we might leave you. We are going now." If one failed to do this, it would be like leaving part of the baby behind and the baby would be cross all evening. [774]

Sometimes other children in the family would be called upon to look after the infant. They were apt to get tired quickly however and tell their mother: "Hurry up and take your baby or I will drop it." Girls were depended upon more than boys to look after younger siblings, and girls more or less were expected to do so "right from the beginning." The old women felt that formerly 854 857 593

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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857 men were much more interested in children than they seem to be at present.

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857 Just as soon as a child was old enough to look after himself—say from about the age of three or four years—he would be compelled to bathe every morning before eating. An older boy would supervise his younger brothers and see to it that they complied with the regulation—even in winter when it was sometimes necessary to cut a hole in the ice. Al says: "This is what makes one tough." Charles gave as illustration an incident which occurred one morning when there was ice on the edge of the river and snow was floating on the surface. "An older brother said to his three younger brothers: 'Go and take a plunge.' The wind was blowing and the three boys sat on the bank, each one encouraging the other to be the first one in. The older brother came behind them yelling: 'I didn't say to you boys to stay on the edge—I said to take a plunge!' Whereupon he threw each of them in the icy water telling them to wash their faces, hair and hands. He then sent them home to water the horses while he took his plunge." In case the lodge might be too far from a stream in winter, the boys and men rolled in the snow and rubbed their bodies with it. Everyone, young and old alike, bathed every day.

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751 That the daily dip was looked upon as a health measure is shown by the statement of Cora who remarked that when she was small she used to bathe daily in the creek and she has never been sick up to the present. Coming Daylight, too, said that she had kept up the practice until a few years ago and complains that she has been sickly ever since giving it up.

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751 It was considered important for health's sake to drink a lot of water too. The relatives who raised Coming Daylight used to tell her to wash her mouth out with water immediately upon arising. Further she was instructed to drink water right after eating, even though she might not feel thirsty, and to walk about after finishing a meal. She claims she followed these rules all her life and that for this reason she is not troubled, as so many of the aged are, with difficulty in controlling urination, and so on.

302 After the morning bath, all would have their faces painted all over with red paint "in order to keep their faces clean and light-skinned." Coming Daylight complained that since this practice

CHAPTER VIII

CHILDHOOD

858 In the days before the buffalo disappeared and before formal schooling was available, childhood, it was said, for girls was shorter and for boys was longer than at present. A girl was ordinarily [582] given in marriage before she was twelve years old—certainly before she attained physiological maturity. A boy on the other hand, though seemingly anxious to participate in hunting and in war as soon as he was able, was not forced to bear the full responsibilities of adulthood until the end of adolescence. While there was considerable variation from family to family in the amount of time required of children in training for practical tasks, all enjoyed a considerable amount of "free time."

PLAY

●857 Singer and Coming Daylight, the two oldest of our informants, 526 in recalling the amusements and pastimes of their youth, decided that sliding down hills was one of the most pleasurable as it could be done at any time of the year. In winter, when there was snow, [493] the boys used a kind of sled made by lashing buffalo rib-bones together. Girls managed just as well by simply sitting on their robes and holding between their legs the end which usually hung free. In summer a stiff buffalo hide was used for sliding down the grassy slopes.[1] When the water was frozen, boys and girls alike [524] skated with their feet on the ice, thus clearing a slick surface on which to spin their tops made of horn.

857 Swimming, however, was the great sport in summer. Girls left 526 their dresses close to the bank, those of the older girls in a neat row closest to the edge and those of the smaller girls in the next 481 row. Beginners used the dog-paddle, but the boys developed profi-

[1] For this and some other types of amusement, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 190–91.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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ciency with the overhand stroke and girls with the breast stroke.[1] Sometimes the children amused themselves by rolling down the bank so that their bodies made a loud smack as they hit the water. At other times they held contests to see who could dive and stay under the longest time, or who could make the biggest bubble by exhaling under water. Follow-the-leader was played even in big rivers like the Missouri, but only the more courageous participated in this game. The one who had the reputation as bravest was the leader, and Coming Daylight claimed that she, herself, often led off, one of her accomplishments being the ability to swim quite far under water.

There was no adult supervision of children at play and they spent much time at the water's edge, even when not intending to swim. Modelling in clay was done by boys as well as by girls. The latter liked especially to form wet clay into "parfleches" and incise marks to represent beaded and painted designs.

Walking on stilts, teetering on logs, swinging by standing in a loop of rawhide, all were considered enjoyable activities for little girls. Nevertheless some of their games were quite rough and-tumble. In one such game, girls formed a circle, each pinching the flesh on the back of her neighbor's left hand; while standing thus they sang a song which was repeated as many times as necessary until someone let go of her neighbor's hand; whereupon this girl was jumped on and mauled by all the others. In another game, one girl, with her eyes closed, would try to find the others who were seated in a row on the ground. Different ones would call out: "This way! This way!" Each was anxious to be the first discovered. As soon as the girl who was "it" touched one of the others, she picked her up and, carrying her upside-down on her back to the spot from which she had originally started, she dumped her burden on the ground. This procedure was repeated until "it" had carried each girl, but the last one to be dumped was tickled unmercifully by all the others.

Girls played with two kinds of balls. One type was of buckskin stuffed with deer-hair. This they would toss to one another. The other type of ball was large and made from the bladder of a buffalo cow, dried and stuffed.

[1] The marked ability of the Gros Ventres in swimming was noted in 1833 by Maximilian, p. 72.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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buffalo cow, dried and stuffed. This type they would bounce and kick. A popular game played among girls in spring was as follows. The girls holding hands formed a big ring. One girl in the center would have a ball. She would throw it at anyone in the ring. When she hit her chosen victim on the chest with the ball, the girls let go of each other's hands and each ran for a piece of buffalo chip where she would be "safe."[1]

A game played by boys and girls together in the evening was as follows. The children would line up according to size behind the tallest boy who would have in his hand a stick which was smouldering at the end. Each child held on tightly to the one in front of him. The boy holding the stick would try to touch the smallest child at the end of the line. The line would writhe as big sparks would fly and sometimes hair got singed. One old woman, recalling this game, remarked: "I don't know when we would get to bed, we had such a good time!"

Sometimes the children would send one of the group on an errand. Those who stayed behind would wet their hands with their tongues and say: "We will watch this to see if it takes you a long time or not." If their hands were still wet when the member of the group returned, they decided that he had done the errand very quickly.

When there were pretty clouds in the sky a little girl might point one out to the other children and tell them to watch it. Then she would stand at the bank of the river, bending over at the waist and violently flinging her arms from side to side while singing. The others would watch the cloud and tell her that it was disappearing and soon it would be gone. "They used to think they could make the cloud disappear by singing that song."

If a group of girls were playing together and some one boy, say from seven to nine years old, would butt in, the girls would all sit down to show that they resented the intrusion. If the boy did not leave, the girls would then form a circle around him and sing a derisive song. Thus the boy would be shamed and run off. The opportunity for this did not occur very often, since boys from about the age of seven usually went off to be by themselves

[1] For description of ball games and illustration of type of football, see Kroeber, 1908, fig. 23.

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at play. It was said that a girl, of course, would never think of attempting to break into a group of boys. 857 524

Sometimes a group of boys tried to break up the girls' play. One way they pestered them was to wait until they were about to slide down a hill. Just as a girl would be ready to start, one of the boys would grab one of her legs and spin her around so that she would go down the hill backwards.

A favorite sport among boys involved skill in shooting arrows.[4] One game was to plant a marked arrow as a target. Then two boys would shoot two arrows each, and the one whose arrow came closest to the marker would take the arrows of his opponent. Sometimes they would see who could shoot the greatest distance. An interesting variation was to fasten a bow to upright sticks, one stick shorter than the other, so that the bow slanted with the string up. The player would stand on one side of the bow and tap the arrow against the bowstring to get the string vibrating, and when he judged the vibration sufficient to send the arrow toward the marker about 35-40 feet distant, he would release the arrow. Then another player would try his luck. The one who came closer to the marker would take the arrow of the one who lost. 857 526

Boys played a variant of the hoop and pole game. The hoop was larger than that used in the game as played by adults and a split stick was used as lance. The thrower aimed at the center of the wheel and, if he hit it, the shot was called "the crow." Another wheel game played by boys was rolling hoops made of green willow wrapped with willow bark. There were no crosspieces in this wheel which was about 16 inches in diameter. Two teams lined up and the hoop was rolled as swiftly as possible by a member of one team while the members of the opposing team by shooting arrows tried to hit the rim of the hoop. If one succeeded and thus stopped the wheel, he retrieved his arrow, placed the hoop against a rock and had a chance to hit the rim while the hoop was at rest.

Occasionally there was trouble between boys who were contesting. Thick told of one occasion when he and his partner were betting against two other boys. Thick himself happened to make the winning point by splitting the upright arrow at which they 857 526 578

[4] Some boys' games are described by Kroeber, 1908, pp. 186–87.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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were shooting. "Just as I leaned down to pick up the arrows which had been bet and fairly won, one of the other boys got mad and shot at me. The arrow hit my hand and I bear the scar to this day. On another occasion at the same kind of game, my partner and I won, and one of the boys of the opposing couple hit both of us over the head with his bow. My people always discouraged me from fighting—I was a shy boy in any case—but my partner took the bow away from one of our opponents and in turn hit him over the head. The opponent ran home and reported to his parents. His mother was the kind who took up for her sons and so she came toward my partner and me. My partner was still angry and called out to the woman: 'We are going to shoot you with our arrows if you come any closer!' Whereupon the woman turned around and went back without saying anything. When our parents heard of this, however, both my partner and I were given a good tongue-lashing for having threatened a woman."

In summer, boys of the same band playing together as a group expected a fight if they came in contact with a group from another band. While sometimes they used bows and arrows in this type of fighting, more often they used mud balls propelled from the end of a willow stick about three feet long. Thick gave the following account of one of these battles in which he participated as a boy.

"One summer day I was with my band group, the Frozens. We expected we might be raided, so we had already prepared mud balls and were modeling clay figures—horses, buffalo, men, and so on—when the Upper Quarters gang attacked. We Frozens grabbed our sticks and mud balls and ran into a coulee and then turned on the Upper Quarters. As the latter approached they protected themselves by holding their robes up in front of their faces, since the mud balls were aimed at their heads. Jim Shortman happened to be the member of the Upper Quarters who was 'bravest' and in the lead. I aimed at him and Jim put up his robe and warded off the shot; but Dwarf, who was right beside me, threw a mud ball immediately after I had and hit Jim right in the eye, breaking the skin and knocking him down. When they saw the blood, Jim ran home and the others, especially Dwarf, were scared. When Dwarf saw Jim's father coming toward

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them, he was afraid to go to his own home, so he ran to a neighbor's. Jim's father found him there half-crying. He took Dwarf by the wrist and said: 'Come my friend.' He led him to his home and Dwarf thought he was going to be killed. On the contrary, however, Jim's father led him into his lodge and said: 'My friend, I am glad you made my boy cry. I have never laid a hand on him nor did I ever make him cry, and I'm glad you have done this.' He then gave Dwarf a big pile of meat and told him to eat as much as he liked and to take the rest home. As Dwarf was leaving Jim's father took a valuable Hudson's Bay blanket and cut it in two and gave him half saying: 'Here is this, use it for your blanket.' Then he took another half-blanket and said: 'Have your mother make leggins for you. Friend, I am glad you made my boy cry. I thank you for it. Now you can go home.' It just so happened, fortunately for Dwarf, that Jim Shortman was a beloved-child." [8]

Occasionally girls, or sometimes boys and girls together, formed a group in the evening to sing in front of the lodge of a rich family who they knew had such a specially loved child. The group danced and sang and then the woman of the lodge would invite them in. She would feed them and say that she was doing so in the name of that beloved-child.

Coming Daylight described how she joined groups who were going around the camp circle singing in front of the lodges of those who had returned successfully from a war party. This was before she was married and so she had to get permission from her grandmother. Mounted on a horse with a girl friend her own age, whose brother was supposed to keep an eye on them, they rode with the others. Singer admitted she had not participated in such singing parties when she was a child because she never had a horse to ride upon.

Much of the leisure time of children was seemingly spent in play which reflected the daily routine of adult life as well as many aspects of the life cycle. A group went quite far outside the camp circle, for instance, to play they were "married folk." If little boys went along with the girls, some would be "husbands," some "sons" and "sons-in-law." The "women" would tell their

[8] For details on the concept of the beloved-child, see Flannery, 1941.

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857 524 "husbands": "Go out and hunt buffalo." The boys would go off and stay a little while and on their way back made noises like neighing horses. This would be a sign for the girls to come to meet them and make comments such as: "Oh, what a lot of meat you are bringing!" Then they would pretend to slice, cook, and eat this imaginary meat. Once in a while the children actually [224] snared a gopher, the skin of which served very well in their play as a food sack.

In order to lend excitement to this kind of play, they might divide into two groups and one "tribe" would attack the other. When their "husbands" or loved ones were "killed," the girls mourned, crying just as they had observed grown-ups do, even going so far as to make marks on their legs with mud to represent cuts. A "corpse" would be prepared for "burial," as they had seen the dead wrapped, with the exception that in play they failed to wrap the head.

Sometimes girls would take the foreleg of a buffalo, for example, and wrap it up to serve as a "baby." After having gotten from the river a certain kind of reed to serve as their hair, when the baby "died" they cut off their "hair" as a sign of mourning.

Many women described the lodges they, as children, built which [492] were large enough to play in. Garter Snake used a big yellow dog that belonged to her grandmother as a horse, and when her lodge moved she packed everything on a travois which the dog drew. When it was not convenient to have the lodges built large enough to actually accommodate the children inside, the formation of the camp circle was copied by making large leaves into the shape of tipis. Sticks then represented horses and other sticks attached thereto were travois. These little wooden horses might be fitted out like real ones, with miniature beaded horse blankets, and so on. Occasionally, too, a little boy might pretend he was a horse and drag the travois while being led by a girl as he held a line in his mouth. When this type of horse was out grazing, the owner would have a difficult time catching it.

Sometimes the girls pretended that they cut off their little fingers as a sacrifice, even holding sage to the "wound" as in real life. Coming Daylight and Garter Snake, both of whom as children were associated with one of the Sacred Pipes, mentioned that

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many girls liked to pretend that they had one of these Pipes at their play-lodge. They used a certain kind of flower to represent the Pipe and would put it outside the play-lodge in the same position as the real Pipe was placed. They smudged and sang Pipe songs just as their elders did. Once in a while they would pretend they were going to transfer the Pipe. Mud was smeared on their foreheads just as the Keeper used paint. The others would seize the new "Keeper," paint him, go through an imitation of the ceremonies, sing songs, and so on. At the end of the game, however, the rest of the children finally took the "Keeper" and dumped him in the water head foremost,—an indignity that would have been out of the question in regard to a real Keeper.

Thus it was evident how much children learned by observation. It was specifically stated in regard to the learning of songs that no one ever sat down with a child to teach him a special song or dance, that he would pick up songs and dances by hearing and seeing them performed at the various ceremonies. Similarly, according to both Coming Daylight and to Singer, there was no special teaching in regard to a knowledge of the Supreme Being. Children would know about Him because they would from infancy have heard older people mention Him. In the old days people never did anything without first saying a prayer. The prayers always started out by mentioning the name of the "One above the White Man," and then names of other beings followed.[6]

Training

Formal training, in skills necessary for women's work, was begun for little girls at an early age. This was usually in the hands of a female relative,—a grandmother or perhaps a widowed aunt, —to whom the child would be sent at about the age of seven years. The reason for removing a girl from her immediate family circle was said to have been to protect her virginity. Her parents wanted to send her "where no men were living, as they didn't want a girl around home with her father, brother, male cousins." Should there not be a suitable relative, however, the girls' parents would keep her at home and she would receive training in domestic duties from her own mother. In any case, the girl was sup-

[6] Religion is treated in full in Cooper Ms. 1949.

posed to be watched over and kept under close supervision. For her there was much less freedom than for a boy of like age.

As a rare treat, a girl of eight or nine might have been allowed to stay with a friend of her own age overnight, providing her guardian knew exactly where she was and that there was some responsible party to look after her. Boys of the same age and even younger could come and go more or less as they pleased. In illustration Al Chandler told of an incident in his childhood. "At the death of my uncle, the corpse was placed in a lodge removed at some distance from where he resided. I was only a little fellow at the time and I wandered over to that lodge. Not realizing my uncle was dead, I crawled under the covers. I was not missed from home and was not discovered until the next morning when my grandfather came to the lodge to mourn. Thereafter for a week or so my grandmother watched me when I set off from home, but when she saw I was steering clear of that particular lodge, she allowed me to go without saying anything. She knew I could take care of myself so she didn't care where I went or when I came home."

In spite of strict supervision of girls, sometimes they evaded their guardians. Coming Daylight told of one of the "tricks" that she had used. "One night I heard there was dancing and my sister and I wanted to sneak out to enjoy the fun while my grandmother was sleeping. We rolled up our blankets and put them beside her. Fortunately she didn't awaken even when we came in. If she had known we were out she would have come after us and given us a good lecture when we got home."

So far as training in domestic tasks is concerned, it was considered an important part of a girl's duty to gather berries and to dig roots. Some older woman went with a group of girls to show them what to collect, pointing out at the same time the things that were not edible. Each girl worked and whatever she garnered would be given by her to her mother or grandmother. What was not used immediately would then be stored for winter use.

Learning to slice meat very thin for drying seemed to have been picked up easily by girls at playing "house." Skinning and butchering were much more difficult tasks which had to be learned carefully. These were considered mainly work for men, but it

787 made up my mind that I did not want such power, the immediate reason for my refusal being that I had seen doctors who swallowed what they had sucked from the weak spot in patients whom they cured, and I just couldn't bring myself to have to do likewise."

857 562 Although boys had much more freedom than had girls, they too were assigned tasks at a fairly early age. One of the responsibilities of boys was to water the horses during the day. At about the age of fourteen, however, a boy would be required to take the horses out to graze immediately after taking his morning plunge. He would be gone perhaps three or four hours and would eat only after he returned.

857 868 852 The play of younger boys with bow and arrow was training for later life. The older boys accompanied the men on hunting parties and by the time they were about 18 most were skilled hunters. Some families, it was said, took advantage of the fact that [431] a boy would have killed his first big game,—antelope, deer, buffalo, —by making a feast at which this game was served. On such an occasion the boy stood at the center and gave away property, such as horses and blankets provided by his father or uncle, in [421] order to mark the event. This was considered training for the way he should behave in later life in regard to his own property.

857 868 [533] [777] Boys were trained in trapping as well as hunting. There were certain songs which were sung by grandparents as the boys danced around in the lodge both before and after trapping. These songs were supposed to bring luck in finding game.

Sometimes when older boys were out taking care of horses, they would band together, daub their faces and bodies with mud as "war paint," and make a "raid" on the camp in order to steal meat which was drying on racks. The women who had worked so hard to prepare the meat got angry and sometimes fought the boys with sticks. Usually, the boys were successful, and would then cook the meat and have a wonderful feast,[1] far outside the camp circle.

[554] Men encouraged their sons to be brave, and a boy would be anxious to go along on a real raiding party just as soon as possible because a young man had no standing until he had risked his life. An adolescent boy who accompanied a war party had to be a man

[1] This type of raiding is also described by Kroeber, 1908, p. 182.

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among men. It was a severe ordeal and the older men had no mercy on these youngsters.

Occasionally as training in bravery, the heart of a bear was taken raw and cut into small bits. After calling together the older boys and young men and lining them up, each one in turn was given a bit of the heart dipped in fresh blood and asked: "Well, are you going to have a brave heart?" Some were able to swallow it easily, but others could not stomach it. Those who were able to swallow and retain it were said to be the really brave ones.[8]

It was indicated by many informants that in the old days a man would almost have to have had supernatural powers in order to be outstandingly successful in war or to achieve fame as a medicine man. In fact it was thought that supernatural powers could be helpful in many aspects of life including gambling and love. Guardians, however, used to warn the boys and young men under their care that "you can't get something for nothing." By this was meant that a person who accepted supernatural power would not live out his full span of life. Thus, according to The Boy, parents emphasized in training their sons that, rather than going on power quests, they should be ambitious to acquire fame and respect by developing their natural abilities. Nevertheless many sought and obtained supernatural powers, visions apparently often being vouchsafed in youth, although the power might not have been used until later in life. It was believed that those who accepted and used such supernatural powers died prematurely.[9]

Methods of Instruction

Oral instruction, or "lecturing," stands out in the Gros Ventre mind as the most important method of child training. All of our middle-aged and older informants agreed that some relative, often either the mother or the father, lectured their children almost every day, telling them what was right and what was wrong and "how to live." If boys and girls were present together, there were some subjects which could not be touched upon and would be reserved for fathers to speak about to their sons and for mothers

[8] It was said that, in the distant past, the heart of an enemy was so devoured by warriors. For historical confirmation, see Henry, v. 2, p. 734.
[9] Full discussion of supernatural powers is given in Cooper Ms., 1949.

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Gambling power was of a lower order of dignity and solemnity than power obtained by fasting on the mountains and hill tops. It was taken less seriously, more lightly, and, if we may judge from attitudes today, with an undercurrent of amused jocoseness. It was not, as was power gotten on mountains, transferrable by the original possessor to another, or at least it was not transferred. For one reason others did not usually want it, on account of the ailments and shortened life its possession entailed. A man who was known to have such power was further handicapped: his fellow tribesmen would not ordinarily gamble against him and so his opportunities for participation were few, being limited mostly to games played by the Gros Ventre with other tribes. In such intertribal games, however, he would become a popular champion, and would derive therefrom a certain prestige as well as material gains. The possession then of gambling power, while to a certain limited extent an asset to its owner, was in more respects than one a decided liability.

It may be added here that while those who possessed supernatural gambling power are spoken of today by English-speaking Gros Ventre as "professional gamblers," in reality there were no professional gamblers among the Gros Ventre even in the old days, professional, that is, in the sense of making their living or most of their living at gambling.

The following three narratives, related by The Boy, illustrate various aspects of gambling power.

Narrative 1. Lone Bear, The Boy's wife's father, had gambling power. While he was still in his prime, his legs started hurting him. To escape the penalty he quit gambling. But in vain. His legs went bad, and he died before his time.

Narrative 2. When Lame Bull, The Boy's father, was a young boy about ten years of age he had a friend of about the same age, called Keg, to whom he was much attached. Keg, like other boys of his age, had the daily chore of rising long before daylight and driving out the family horses away from camp to graze. One morning he was awakened very early and was told to drive the horses out. He did so, but when he got out to the grazing ground he decided to steal a few winks lying face down. So he fell asleep, and all at once he started to dream. He dreamed that he saw a big hand game going on with high stakes and one fellow winning everything. Keg looked at this fellow closely and saw it was he, Keg, himself. This man spoke to Keg saying: "Do as you see me doing here. Use my throat as an object [button] to hide."

Then Keg woke up and looked around, and there right near where he lay he saw a covey of prairie chickens doing their mating dance and making a whirring noise with their tails. When he got back he said to Lame Bull: "Let's play and see whether what I dreamed is true. I'll put my helper to the test." Lame Bull tried to guess Keg, but Keg would make a noise like a prairie chicken and thereupon